



**#STRONGIOWA**

## 2021 IN FRANKLIN COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State research and resources. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Franklin County for a #STRONGIOWA.



**Sustainable  
ENVIRONMENTS**



**Thriving  
COMMUNITIES**



**Resilient  
PEOPLE**



**Future  
LEADERS**

### Serving Franklin County

As Iowans adjusted to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, ISU Extension and Outreach continued to prioritize health and safety as we delivered research-based education to the people of Franklin County. During 2021 we focused on the following efforts.

**The Franklin County Extension Council** has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents you and your issues. We are always serving Iowans and we are here for you. Now. Always.

***Thank you for your support.***

**David Pingel**

*Extension Council Chair*

**Joe DeVries**

*Council Treasurer*

**Gary Stenzel**

*Council Member*

**Pam Meints**

*Council Member*

**Jeromy Keehn**

*Council Member*

**Kari Subbert**

*Council Vice Chair*

**Missy Crawford\***

*Council Secretary*

**Maria Siems**

*Council Member*

**Kaitlyn Porter**

*Council Member*

\*Resigned in October 2021 to become county director.

In March, county youth coordinator Jackie Dohlman worked with 4-H youth and leaders to organize virtual educational presentations and to learn new painting techniques.

More than 20 Franklin County 4-H youth learned how to create unique abstract paintings from visual arts project volunteer Sherry Ellis on March 20. Ellis packaged the painting materials needed for each member and led them through a fluid chain pull painting virtual workshop. Participants also learned about elements and principles of design. Many of these paintings were exhibited at the Franklin County Fair this summer.



Franklin County 4-H communications project volunteer Val Plagge led a workshop on how to give presentations at virtual 4-H club meetings. Many 4-H clubs are meeting virtually because of COVID-19. Members learned how to organize their presentation, how to format their presentation slides, and how to practice giving their presentation. Plagge also noted that these tips can be used giving presentations in person as well.

## Welcome and Best Wishes

While COVID-19 continued to challenge our ability to deliver programming, it did not slow change in the lives of our staff. In 2021 we welcomed new staff to our office and sent best wishes to staff who departed, bound for new adventures.



In October we welcomed Missy Crawford as the new county director and program coordinator. In this role, she is not just responsible for running the day-to-day activities of the office, but she also identifies the emerging needs of the county and coordinates educational events to address those needs.



In July we said farewell to Barb Ristau. Barb worked for extension for more than 39 years. Food and nutrition, canning and food preservation, and money management and budgeting were just some of Barb's focus areas. Barb has managed the 4-H food stand at the Franklin County Fair since 1991.



In August we said farewell to Michelle Sackville. Michelle moved up to a regional director position and now oversees operations in Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas and Webster counties. Regional directors provide leadership, vision, and coaching to county extension councils and staff to meet the programmatic, legal, and financial needs of the extension district.



In November we said farewell to Laela Ragsdale. Laela was instrumental in garden club programming and assisting with Clover Kids. Laela compiled "take-home" learning kits during the pandemic that allowed kids in kindergarten through third grade to continue learning from home when not able to meet in person. She is attending NIACC, where she is an education major.



## School Gardens Expand in Franklin County

This spring and summer students in the Franklin County area participated in garden clubs. A large portion of students helped prepare and plant the school gardens at the Hampton-Dumont Middle School and every classroom at Hampton-Dumont South Side Elementary had the opportunity to work in the school garden. At West Fork Elementary, students met twice a week from March to May in the school greenhouse to learn about and gain hands-on experience in gardening.

In June and July, about 45 students participated in garden clubs in Sheffield, Latimer, Hampton-Dumont Middle School, and Hampton-Dumont South Side Elementary. The students in garden club got experience in community service by cleaning up the landscaping around the Cub Cadet Daycare. They also participated in Pedal and Prairie with Franklin County Conservation. They had many opportunities to bring home plants to plant in their own gardens and to bring home fresh produce from the school gardens.

## Showcasing 4-H at the County Fair

ISU Extension and Outreach 4-H in Franklin County held a new contest this year at the Franklin County Fair. Teams of two to four youth had a chance to solve a problem by building a mock-up model, with materials provided, and prepare a short, simple presentation on their solution, all within 90 minutes. Five teams competed, with the top team advancing to the Invent STEM State Fair Challenge in August. The youth participating in this





hands-on experience gained teamwork, communication, and problem solving skills using current and futuristic technology.

### Franklin County Competes at State 4-H WHEP Contest



Six Franklin County 4-H members competed at the first State 4-H Wildlife Habitat Education Program contest held at the Neil Smith Wildlife Refuge near Prairie City. These members have been meeting and preparing for the contest once a week since January. During the contest, participants had to come up with a plan to improve the habitat on a piece of property for specific wildlife, take a wildlife identification quiz, and help plant some native plants at the refuge.

### Youth Learn about “All Things Solar”

Seven middle schoolers from Franklin County attended the All Things Solar day camp Wednesday, August 11 at Hampton-Dumont Middle School in Hampton. Students learned how the sun’s energy runs a solar oven to toast a s’more and how it makes a solar landscape light work. They also created a sun clock to tell time and an art project using sun-sensitive paper. A guest speaker from Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative shared knowledge of solar power as well. This summer program, pictured top right, was led by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Franklin County staff.



Photo (L): Students dissect a solar landscape light to see how it works. Photo (R): Youth create solar ovens to make their afternoon s’more snacks.

### Franklin County Partners with Local Group to Highlight Mental Health

During Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Week, Franklin County extension, along with Mission Possible Franklin County, a local career and college readiness group, created and distributed 471 "Mindful Minute" mental health kits to middle school students. This was done as a way to highlight the importance of good mental health habits. Kits were dropped off at local elementary school counselors' offices as well.

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## Rising Star Interns Make an Impact with Franklin County Projects

Three Rising Star interns returned to Franklin County during the summer and made a big impact with two community projects.

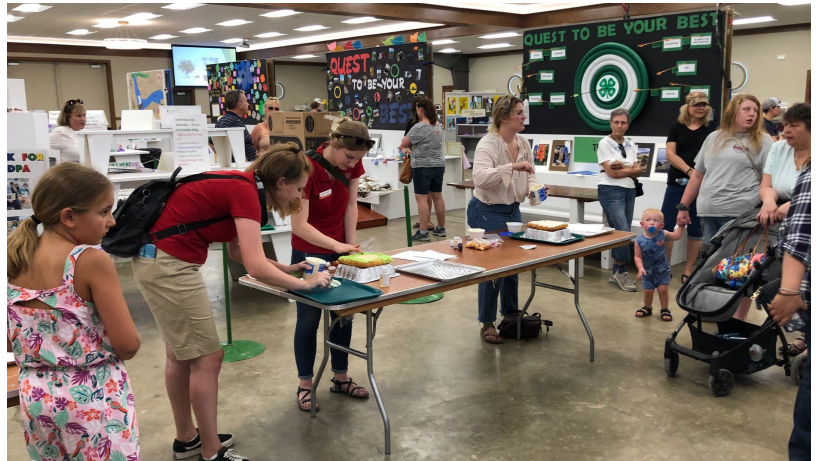
The first project was a concept design for a “pocket park” in downtown Hampton. The challenge was to design a meeting place for the community on an under-utilized downtown lot. The concept was presented to officials who will work to implement the project in the future.

The second project was to help Hampton increase activity at the farmers market through the use of the social media platform Facebook. Rising Star interns helped the farmers market through delivering a sustainable plan to make consistent use of their social media accounts while maintaining a new brand identity. This plan included creating easy-to-use graphics for social media use, developing an intern position in order to maintain this presence online, collecting statistics of the accounts, and making suggestions for attracting the attention of young families in the community.



## Rising Star interns Compete in “Cake Wars” at the Franklin County Fair

Rising Star interns were able to take time out of their busy days to participate in the “Cake Wars” event sponsored by ISU Extension and Outreach at the Franklin County Fair. Teams of two were challenged with creating the best cake possible in 30 minutes. Teams received decorating supplies and could win extra decorations. Finished cakes were judged by a local cupcake business on creativity, overall appearance, and best teamwork.



## Extension Staff



**Missy Crawford**  
County Director



**Donovan Olson**  
Regional Director



**Jackie Dohlman**  
County Youth Coordinator



**Kimberly Booth**  
After School Coordinator



**Traci Kloetzer**  
Office Manager

## ISU Extension and Outreach Franklin County

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